Water shortage in developing countries

2771. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether a recent study by FAO(UN) has predicted severe water shortage in developing countries;

(b) whether according to the report the water problem will aggravate to the extent that every one country among the five developing countries will face acute water scarcity;

(c) whether India participated in the World Water Forum conclave held in Kyoto during March 2003; and

(d) if so, a summary of the deliberations held at the conclave?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI): (a) As per a new study by FAO (UN) titled 'Unlocking the water potential of agriculture, published on the eve of the Third World Water Forum in Kyoto, it is stated *inter-alia* that farmers in developing countries will face increasing competition for scarce freshwater resources from industry and domestic users. It further states that while there is no global water crises, the serious water and food security problems in some developing countries and regions need to be urgently addressed.

(b) Yes, Madam.

(c) Yes, Madam. An Indian delegation led by Shri Arjun Charan Sethi, Minister of Water Resources participated in the Third World Water Forum held in Osaka, Shiga and Kyoto, Japan during March, 2003.

(d) The 3rd World Water Forum met from 16-23rd March, 2003 in Kyoto, Osaka and Shiga, Japan. On this occasion, two Ministerial meetings, namely Irrigation Ministers' meet on "Water Food and Agriculture" and main Ministerial Conference were organized on 21st March and 22-23 March respectively.

During the ministerial meeting on "Water, Food and Agriculture", a presentation was made by Secretary (WR) highlighting its achievements in the field of agriculture, water resources development

and management alongwith action which needs to be taken to solve agriculture water issues in our country. In this regard, need for building dams to augment water supplies for food security and poverty alleviation as well as imperative need for transfer of water from surplus areas to deficit areas was expressed. A Ministerial declaration, which was earlier negotiated after prolonged discussions by senior officers, was adopted on 21st March, 2003. It outlines a plan for action to modernize and improve agriculture use, increase water prodcutivity, promote better governance, consider environmental aspects, undertake research and development and foster international cooperation.

In the main ministerial declaration adopted in the final plenary session on 23rd March, statement was made on General Policy, Water Resources Management and Benefit Sharing, Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation, Water for Food and Rural Development, Water Pollution Prevention and Ecosystem Conservation and Disaster Mitigation and Risk Management.

Minister (WR) chaired one of the five sub-groups session of the ministerial conference where issue of "Water Resources Management and Benefit Sharing* was discussed. This session was attended by Ministers/representatives of 62 countries, one region and eight International Organizations.

In this sub-group meeting, the need to develop dams for irrigation, storages, flood control and hydro-electric energy with due consideration to environmental and social impact as well as sound resettlement plans was brought out. It also underscored the need for international financial assistance for capacity building & technology transfer. It also urged the need for good governance and confidence-building measures and emphasized the requirement to increase the use of innovative and appropriate technologies such as desalination and re-use of treated water.

Apart from the Senior Officials' Meetings for finalization of Draft Declaration and the Ministerial Conference in which the Declarations were adopted, there were many Sessions, some of them running parallel, organized at Kyoto, Shiga and Osaka.